

VZCZCXR08547
OO RUEHDBU RUEHIK RUEHYG
DE RUCNDT #0503/01 0731904
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 141904Z MAR 06
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8314
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000503

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PGOV AF

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE RESPONSE: UN OUTLINES EXPANDED FORMAT FOR AFGHAN DONOR COORDINATION BOARD

REF: STATE 35806

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Ambassador Wolff made reftel points in a meeting with UN Assistant Secretary-General (A/SYG) for Peacekeeping Hedi Annabi and other Department of Peacekeeping Officials (DPKO) officials on March 10. He urged the Secretariat to ensure the UN Assistance Mission in

SIPDIS

Afghanistan (UNAMA) has the resources necessary to fulfill its new role as co-chair of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB). Per reftel, the Ambassador argued that membership in the JCMB should be limited but should include key partners and troop contributors. He outlined USG support for a Board comprising 14 international representatives. While noting that the UN is "not looking at shrinking its presence" in Afghanistan, Annabi and his staff argued that any expansion -- including maintaining some of the 18 sub-regional UN offices established during the recent election period -- would depend on security and support from member states for an increased UNAMA budget. On the composition of the Board, Annabi pointed to pressure from several states seeking membership to defend Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Koenigs's proposal for 20 international representatives. When informed of the USG's strong concerns about this larger format, UN officials suggested flexibility on membership for Canada and Italy could help the UN limit the overall size of the Board. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Ambassador Wolff delivered reftel points to UN A/SYG for Peacekeeping Hedi Annabi and other DPKO officials on March 10 (Annabi had just returned from week-long travel March 10; U/SYG Guehenno is overseas until March 20). Wolff emphasized the importance the USG attached to the UN's role in Afghanistan. He noted that under the newly-launched Compact for Afghanistan, the UN's responsibilities would increase as co-chair of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) with the Government of Afghanistan (GOA). The UN Secretariat should therefore ensure that the resources dedicated to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) are adequate to fulfill its new role. Ambassador Wolff argued that the UN should consider the proposal to maintain its sub-regional offices in Afghanistan, established during the electoral period, as secure platforms from which donors and NGOs could provide assistance. Per reftel, the Ambassador argued that membership in the JCMB should be limited but should include key partners and troop contributors. He outlined USG support for a Board comprising 14 international representatives.

UN Will Not Shrink its Presence

¶3. (SBU) Drawing attention to SYG Annan's latest report on Afghanistan, Annabi emphasized that the UN was "not looking at shrinking its presence" in the country. He noted that SRSG Tom Koenigs favored a slight increase in UNAMA's

presence in the provinces, but cautioned that "everything depends on security." DPKO Asia and Middle East Division Director Lisa Buttenheim added that the UN had spent considerable energy and resources to ensure that the 18 sub-regional offices it operated with the Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB) complied with minimum UN security standards during the electoral period. If UNAMA were to maintain these offices long-term, it would require member states to authorize considerable additional resources. Buttenheim noted that as a Special Political Mission, UNAMA's budget comes out of the UN's regular budget (Note: As opposed to peacekeeping operations, which are funded out of separate member state contributions. End Note). Recalling that UNAMA's budget would soon come up for review by member states in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), Buttenheim appealed to the USG to support an increase in funding to enable UNAMA to expand its presence.

JCMB: Koenigs Proposes 20 International Members

¶4. (SBU) On the composition of the Board, Annabi reported that the UN had come under pressure from several states demanding permanent seats, all of which were outside the 14 Board members envisioned in the USG proposal. (Note: DPKO staff later told Post that the Russians, Chinese, French, Pakistanis, and Turks had all demarshaled the UN in New York seeking permanent seats. End Note.) Annabi mentioned that Italy and Canada had also demarshaled the Secretariat repeatedly to seek membership on the Board; those missions later confirmed to Post that they had argued for an inclusive structure to justify their own membership and could not now push for a smaller format. As a result of consultations in Kabul and New York, Annabi said Koenigs had devised a structure with 20 international and 7 Afghan representatives. The internationals would come from the following categories:

USUN NEW Y 00000503 002 OF 002

largest donors (US, UK, Japan, Germany, India, EU), largest International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) contributors (Canada, Netherlands, Italy), neighboring states (Pakistan, Iran, China), regional countries (Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Russia), ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom, World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, and the UAE -- a proposal reportedly made by Afghan President Karzai. Recognizing that this large format might be unwieldy, Annabi noted that some business might be done in smaller settings, such as the informal Kabul "tea club" that drafted much of the Afghanistan Compact.

Secretariat Seeks Flexibility on Canada/Italy

SIPDIS

¶5. (SBU) After conferring with the Department on Koenigs's 20 7 format, Post conveyed USG concerns about this structure to DPKO March 10 and Ambassador Wolff followed up with Annabi in a conversation on March 13. Given the ongoing discussions, DPKO officials assured Post that SRSG Koenigs would not/not discuss the details of the composition of the Board during his remarks to the UNSC on March 14. Annabi and Buttenheim, however, emphasized it would be extremely difficult for the UN to exclude countries such as Russia from the Board. Noting that it might be possible to restrict the size of the JCMB if the UN could point to specific criteria for membership, Buttenheim asked how flexible the USG position would be regarding seats for Italy and Canada -- countries that do not make the threshold for donor assistance to the GOA. Buttenheim also argued that rotating seats for regional countries would not solve the UN's dilemma, because, for example, Pakistan would insist on serving on the Board when India occupies a seat. Post reiterated reftel guidance, but indicated that the visit Koenigs and Buttenheim plan to make to Washington March 15-16 would be a good opportunity to discuss the issue further. Separately, diplomats at the UK

Mission told Post that due to the political sensitivities of excluding would-be members, Koenigs appeared committed to the 20/7 format during his March 13 meeting with British PermRep Jones-Parry. While sharing the USG's preference for a Board with 14 international representatives, UKUN staff predicted it would be very difficult to persuade Koenigs to reconsider -- especially if, as they thought likely, he secures SYG Annan's support for his proposal.

BOLTON